

# Till Death Brings Us Together

**Story:** Till Death Brings Us Together

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**Summary:** "Hey, Subaru. Are you scared?" He shook his head quietly. Emilia was taken aback by his confidence for a bit, but she continued. "I think... I'm a little scared. Just a little... scared to die." "... He remained quiet at her words. For Subaru, it was yet another death. But for Emilia, it was the only one. Amidst a bloody battlefield, these two awaited death.

## **\*Chapter 1\*: Till Death Brings Us Together**

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In this ruthless world where I have died again and again, you were my salvation. That's why, if it's to save you, I will...

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Hot.

It was hot. The heat wasn't from the furious flames around him. It was radiating from the life-threatening cut that ran along his stomach to his chest.

His life slowly seeping out, his body remained splayed on the hard ground. He stared at the smoke-filled sky, dyed orange-red by the great fire that had engulfed the royal capital.

Soot particles danced along with the flames and flew into the sky. There was a pungent smell that numbed his nose. His heart beat loudly against his chest as his back was soaked in sweat.

There was so much going on with his body and surroundings in contrast to his empty mind. He stared with blank eyes as he waited for the flame of his life to extinguish. The pain gripped his mind but, he was oddly at peace.

It was probably because of the acceptance of the inevitable doom. It was a shame that the plan didn't work. Everything was on fire. Everyone he knew was either dead or fighting.

Fighting and fighting and fighting. There was no end to the number of enemies. It was an impossible battle. If only he didn't send off Reinhard to fight Capella. If only he didn't send Roswaal to fight the black serpent. If only he didn't make a mistake in allotting his friends.

Then he wouldn't have had to die like this.

At least, he was dying alone with peace. If he just ignored the screams and noises, then it should be fairly peaceful. He hadn't had the chance to see the deaths of his friends, so that too relieved him. Even though they are dead somewhere beyond his vision.

He-- Natsuki Subaru, is a hypocrite. And he knew that.

He wanted to die with as much peace he could gather in this chaotic battlefield where his comrades are losing their lives every second.

Sounds of blades hitting blades echoed along with screams of people and wind. The occasional explosions shook the ground, sending vibrations down his body.

Even in this pandemonium, he only wanted to die with a peaceful mind.

But it was painful, of course. His wounds hurt. And the fact that he failed yet again to save everyone hurt the most.

*"Be...ako."*

He managed to whisper her name, who was long gone. That girl, who died to save him.

*Farewell. For real this time, I suppose.*

Her last words stabbed his heart, ruining the state of peace he was in. He grunted in sadness and rage, swore at himself for being so powerless.

The pain from his bleeding injury was nothing compared to what he was feeling right now. The guilt, the regrets, the sadness, crawled inside his mind and body.

And he could do absolutely nothing to ease the pain and anxiety.

*"Uh..ah..."*

Now he didn't even have the strength to form words from his mouth. Only inaudible grunts and mumbles left his throat. His eyes wavered and tears rolled down his cheeks. He stretched his mouth open trying to say something, anything. He wanted to call out their names one last time.

*"Haa-"*

But he could only let out short gasps. His heart sunk. He couldn't even say their names now.

*\*Hic-!\**

He sobbed uncontrollably. The bleeding increased, but he couldn't care any less about that. Instead of stopping the blood, he used his hands to stop his tears.

*"Ahhh!"*

He tried to scream, but even that failed, for his life was almost gone from his body. It was only a matter of time before he succumbs to death.

*"Hah... hah..."*

His chest fell up and down rapidly as he struggled to breathe. His body started turning cold, the smoke from the fire entered his mouth and reached his lungs, sending him to a coughing fit.

He had long lost the wish to have a peaceful parting. He just wanted this to end, so that he could start over and make things right.

He closed his heavy eyes and tried to calm his mind. Memories flashed by rapidly like a reel.

Beatrice sacrificing herself for him. The crumbling of the royal palace in which Anastasia, Otto and the council of wise men were in. Garfiel running off in rage after Mimi's death. Felix frantically healing anybody he could find. Julius' expression upon witnessing the fall of the palace. Priscilla's sword dancing in the flames. The citizens' bodies burning in fire, rotting by poison, and forcefully turned into something inhuman.

It was painful to see them like this. He didn't want this. All he wanted was to live peacefully. And yet...

*"Gah!"*

Blood gushed out his throat as he coughed and his bloodied nails scratched the ground in an attempt to distract himself. He now knew. His time was near. Images flashed again in his mind.

He saw silver.

*And what about... Emilia...?*

*"---!!"*

Somebody was saying something, but he couldn't hear it through the ringing in his ears.

"---?!"

*What are you saying? Leave me be.*

"---Subaru!!"

"Hah!"

His eyes shot open as he gasped loudly. His eyes flickered about and found the source of the voice.

*"Don't...die Subaru."*

*"Em..."*

His hoarse voice couldn't call out her name. She, Emilia, was on the verge of tears as her hands glowed, providing him warmth.

She was healing him. Or rather, trying to. Her clothes were tattered and dirtied, body covered in various scars and injuries, it was apparent that her mana must be depleted.

Subaru tried to say her name again but, she put her finger on his mouth and shook her head. She bit her lip and continued healing him.

Now he can no longer die alone away from everyone's eye. He should be disappointed but, he felt happy. It felt wrong but he couldn't help being happy that the one he loved the most in this world was with him now, in his last moments.

Sounds of blades clashing and explosions started increasing. Emilia quietly healed him, tears trailed down her amethyst eyes.

*An angel.*

He thought to himself as a distant memory resurfaced. The first day he arrived in this world, the first time he managed to break out of a loop, she yelled at him worriedly when he was injured after saving her.

*She looked just as cute back then.*

He let out a pained chuckle, to which Emilia frowned in return as if to say *don't move*.

Subaru nodded slightly and let her do her job. The noises around them increased, and the flames grew stronger. People's screams heightened up to a crescendo of hysteria.

*\*BOOM\**

A loud explosion shook the ground. Emilia flinched at that, but quickly composed herself and healed him. Subaru could see the fear in her eyes clearly. And yet, she tried to act strong.

For him.

Slowly, the warm glow in her hands flickered and vanished completely. Her face turned pale, and her shoulders turned limp. She had depleted all her mana and strength now.

Subaru glanced at her. She appeared rather calm. Her hands wrapped around his head and brought him onto her lap.

He smiled as she stroked his hair. His wound wasn't healed completely. Just the bleeding stopped, but that too wouldn't last long.

*"Hey, Subaru. Are you scared?"*

He shook his head quietly. Emilia was taken aback by his confidence for a bit, but she continued.

*"I think...I'm a little scared. Just a little... scared to die."*

*"..."*

He remained silent at her words. For Subaru, it was yet another death. But for Emilia, it was the only one. Amidst a bloody battlefield, these two were awaiting death. That's what it looked like to her.

So it was no surprise that she was scared. Her hand were trembling, yet she smiled to assure him. Because she knew that he will go first. But what she didn't know was that death wasn't the end for him.

But a new beginning.

*"It's scary, but, you are here with me. So I feel happy and relieved too. What a conflicting feeling. Oh wait, I shouldn't be feeling relieved when you are in this state..."*

She laughed awkwardly. Her eyes grew warm as she played with his hair.

*"You always did my hair after Puck was gone, didn't you? Let me do it once in a while."*

Subaru grinned and relaxed his body. He was lying on a hard ground but, his head was on something heavenly.

*"Are you thinking about something weird?"*

She asked with a pout which made him chuckle and shake his head. Emilia sighed and glanced up to look at the war zone. The fire was growing and growing. It was a matter of time till it engulfed them.

But then again, the explosions were getting increasingly louder too. It was a matter of time till one fell near them.

Yes, it was only a matter of time...

*"Subaru, Beatrice is..."*

His eyes turned blank as he shook his head. She bit her lip and nodded. He opened his mouth and tried to speak.

*"Gar...fiel?"*

This time, she shook her head sorrowfully. Subaru closed his eyes in acceptance.

He knew that that was what must have happened, but, it was still too much for him. Emilia continued to play with his black hair.

*"If this place wasn't a war zone but our home, how nice it would have been."*

He nodded. Yes, how nice it would have been...

*"In the garden, while looking at the spring flowers, what did you call it again? 'Flower viewing'? We would have done that. Along with tea and snacks. It would have been so much fun, right?"*

He nodded. Yes, it would have been so much fun.

*"We should have done more of that 'star gazing'. You're named after a star, right? That's so nice. You could have taught us more about that."*

He nodded. Yes, I could have taught you all about stars.

*"But...we can't do that again anymore, can't we? We...no longer can...have fun peacefully...like that, can we?"*

*\*BOOM!!!\**

*\*Gasp!\**

The ground rumbled and shook violently upon the impact of another explosive, which fell very near to them. It was so near that they could feel the heat. Emilia and Subaru both gasped in fear.

They thought that was it. That was the end. But fortunately, they were still alive. Or is unfortunately the right word?

Screams of pain and despair followed right after that. Who died? Someone on their side or their enemies' side? The answer was most likely both.

*"...That was close."*

Her voice shook as she whispered. She glanced over at Subaru to get his reply but...

*"...Su..Baru..."*

Tears welled up in her eyes as he grew paler. He was alive, but he won't be for much longer. She was scared to lose him. Scared, to be left alone.

*"It's....okay, Emi...lia."*

He softly whispered as she started sobbing and used all the strength he could muster to place his bloodied hand on her cheek to wipe away her tears. But all it could do was stain her face in red.

*"How is this okay? Everyone...everyone is dead! Those who are alive will die too! Countless innocent people are losing their lives! What did they do?! What did we do to deserve this?! Hey, Subaru. Why? Why is this happening?"*

Her tears trickled down her cheeks and fell on his face. He pulled his brows into a frown.

*I don't like her crying.*

If he could speak, he would have told her over and over again that it would be fine. That he will make sure everything is fine. He would pat her head and embrace her. He would make her feel safe.

If only he had the strength to do it.

Instead, all he was capable of doing was lie on her lap and watch her cry. Truly, this was one of his biggest failures till now.

*"And now..hic! You will leave me too. I don't want that...Subaru...!"*

It hurt a lot. It hurt to watch her break down like this. Her hair was dishevelled, her face was dirtied with mud and blood. She didn't deserve this. She deserved all the happiness in this world.

He wanted to shower her in his love and tell the whole world about how lovely and kind this girl is. No matter how everyone will tease him for that, he didn't care as long as it made her laugh.

And he hated himself for being unable to do any of that this time.

It hurt a lot. It hurt to watch the life seep out of her knight and she could do nothing to change that. She wanted him to be happy. After all, he had done so much for her. So much for everyone. He deserved all the happiness in this world.

She wanted to make him happy. Make him smile. His silly smile was one of the most precious treasures for her that she wanted to protect. It warmed her heart after all.

And she hated herself for being unable to do that.

They hated themselves. But they loved...

*"Subaru, I know...that this isn't where you would have wanted to hear it."*

*Wait.*

*"It's about what you said to me, you know, two years ago."*

*No. Don't-*

*"Subaru, I..."*

Her eyes gleamed as her lips drew into a warm smile. Tears still fell from her eyes but this time, they weren't out of fear and sadness.

*"I really-"*

*\*SHHK!!!\**

*"Ah."*

Surprise painted her face as her eyes grew wide and the smile on her face broke apart. Her body arched backwards as an arrow pierced her chest from her back.

Blood spilt out her mouth and dripped onto his equally shocked face. Her eyes looked into his in despair and regret.

She fell onto her side with a thud and Subaru's head fell off her lap to the ground. He was frozen in shock. What was she going to say? Is it what he thinks it is...?



If so, then...

"Ugh...AHHHHHHH!"

*\*WHOOSH!\**

He smacked his fist onto the ground and wailed as the raging inferno caught up to them. Dragging himself towards her face, he lightly brushed her bangs. She was dead. The arrow pierced her heart.

He cried and pulled her into his arms. Both of them lay on the ground in an embrace. Her body was cold. And his was turning cold as well. But the blaze around them was hot and started to crawl up them.

He embraced her and swore.

*In this ruthless world where I have died again and again, you were my salvation. That's why, if it's to save you, I will...*

Subaru's eyes grew empty as he breathed his last breath and death dragged his soul away from his body. The cruel fire cremated the lifeless two in the lifeless battleground.

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Slowly, his consciousness swayed into circles like a whirlpool. His mind plunged into a sea of darkness. The shadows wrapped him up into a cocoon, which made him feel safe.

How good it would be if he could just stay here forever? But he felt the loss of *something*. That loss made him feel empty. That emptiness dug at his heart, tugging and squeezing.

What is this pain? What did he lose? Just how important is it?

It is more important than his life.

The answer came to him automatically. Yes, that's it. He remembers now. What he lost, what he felt, and what he has to do. He can't waste any more time lazing around here.

He must wake up. He must go.  
He must save them.

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His consciousness resurfaced from the darkness and the world became brighter. His eyelids fluttered in an attempt to clear his vision.

The scene in front of him became clear. There was a long table in front of him, around which the royal candidates sat along with their camps.

He sighed with relief at their sight. They're alive.

*"Subaru? Is something wrong?"*

A sweet voice rang out beside him, making him turn towards her immediately. His chest ached at her sight. She was standing and breathing.

*"Subaru?"*

Emilia asked worriedly as his expression kept growing grim. He snapped out of his daze and shook his head. He turned to face her with a serious look,

*"I love you, Emilia."*

*"Eh?!"*

She yelped in surprise at his sudden confession. It's not like this was the first time, but still. The way he confessed this time was...a little different. He was really serious. Her cheeks flushed red as she grew flustered.

*I don't want to have anyone to have any more regrets..., not me, not her, not anyone.*

*"Well, it's cute and all but can ya two save it for later? We hafta go fight a gruesome battle, ya know?"*

Anastasia interjected and poured cold water on the growing tension between the two.

*"Ri-right. Subaru, this is not the time for this!"*

Emilia tried to sound stern to hide her embarrassment at which everyone snickered. Subaru laughed too and said-

*"Sorry, I just wanted to say the things in my heart before heading off to the 'gruesome' battlefield."*

*"Oh..."*

She wasn't expecting a serious answer. He chuckled and turned towards everyone.

*"So...where were we?"*

*"Did ya have a short-term memory loss? We just completed the plan we're gonna follow-"*

*"Throw that plan out the window."*

*"Hah?"*

Anastasia was taken aback at his sudden rejection of the earlier decided plan. Everybody frowned at him.

*"What do you mean, Subaru? Is the plan insufficient?"*

Julius asked him with a raised brow. Subaru nodded at him and placed both his hands on the table.

*"This plan is bound to fail. We shouldn't underestimate the enemy and prepare for the worst of the worst of the worst-case scenario."*

*"How are you so sure about that?"*

Felt crossed her hands in annoyance. They had just spent over half an hour in making that long and elaborate plan and he was saying that it was going to fail.

*"That..."*

He didn't know how to answer that. Anything related to Return By Death is always difficult to explain.

*What do I say...*

*"Let's just trust Subaru in this one, please?"*

Emilia stepped up and said. Subaru looked at her in surprise, to which she simply smiled.

*"Just like how he has solved everything before, this time too, he must have a good reason. And besides, there's no*

*harm in reinforcing our plan to make it fool-proof, right?"*

*"Exactly. Betty agrees with Emilia, I suppose."*

Beatrice stepped up too and stood beside Subaru. A lump formed in his throat at her sight.

*Right. She is also alive.*

*"Fine. Let's go over it again. Natsuki-kun, do ya have any good ideas?"*

*"Yeah...I do. Some really good ideas."*

He grinned and declared confidently, gaining looks of admiration and intrigue.

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Their new plan of action was established. Everybody agreed that it was much better than the last one. As they all prepared to step into the battlefield, Emilia approached her knight.

*"Um, Subaru."*

*"Yeah?"*

*"I love you too."*

*"!!!"*

He jolted in surprise which made her burst into laughter.

*"Why are you so surprised, dunderhead? I too wanted to say the things in my heart before going to fight."*

*"Ah...I-!"*

Before he knew it, he was crying. In the last loop, he failed to hear these words from her. His happiness knew no bounds. He felt like jumping and running all over the city screaming *'Emilia-tan said she loved me too!!!'*

Emilia sighed at his grinning face and held his hand.

*"Let's win this."*

*"Yeah. Together."*

They smiled with determination and steeled their hearts.

*"Yes, forget all about Betty just like that, in fact."*

They turned around to see a furiously pouting spirit and burst into laughter.

*"My bad, my bad, Beako. How can we forget about our cute daughter?"*

*"Betty is not your daughter, I suppose!"*

She flailed her hands in annoyance as he laughed. This time, for sure, he will not let them die.

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During weddings, the bride and groom vow to be together till death tears them apart. But for these two, his death brings them together.

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